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Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions: Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture on its tenth session

Summary

The tenth session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) was held in Bangkok on 13 December 2013. During the meeting, the Council reviewed the activities and achievements of CAPSA in 2013, including progress in implementing the Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia (SATNET Asia), and the administrative and financial status of CAPSA in 2013.

The Governing Council endorsed the proposed financial and workplan of the Centre for 2014. The Council recommended that CAPSA continue its work in policy advocacy and networking in the area of sustainable agriculture in order to give due importance to agriculture in the regional development agenda. The Council also recommended that CAPSA continue to focus on capacity-building in the area of data collection, storage and analysis.

In addition, the Governing Council made several recommendations regarding the future direction of work of the Centre.

The Commission may wish to deliberate on these issues and propose policy recommendations for the alleviation of poverty through sustainable agriculture in the region.

* E/ESCAP/70/L.1.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

1. The Governing Council recommends that the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) continue its work in policy advocacy and networking in the area of sustainable agriculture in order to give due importance to agriculture in the regional development agenda.

2. The Governing Council recommends that the Centre continue to focus on capacity-building in the area of data collection, storage and analysis.

3. The Governing Council recommends that the Centre quantify the dimensions of sustainability of agriculture on a regional scale and also analyse the linkages between poverty and sustainable agriculture. The

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Council also recommends that the Centre develop a framework to assess the impact of agricultural extension.

4. The Governing Council recommends that CAPSA continue to monitor the impact of the Centre's capacity-building activities in the area of agricultural research for development.

5. The Governing Council recommends that the Centre continue to work on regional networking through the Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia (SATNET Asia) and expand its networking activities related to extension support.

6. The Governing Council recommends that CAPSA continue to collaborate with other international organizations and with national advanced research institutions in the region.

II. Summary of proceedings

A. Activities and accomplishments of CAPSA since the ninth session of the Governing Council

(Agenda item 2a)

7. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Head of the Centre (MPDD/CAPSA/GC(10)/2, section II). The document was introduced by the Head of the Centre.

8. The document contained information about the strategies undertaken by the Centre to address the needs of member States in promoting sustainable agriculture and food security. It also provided an overview of the results delivered that contributed to the expected accomplishments of the subprogramme on Macroeconomic policy and inclusive development, in particular the progress made in promoting sustainable agriculture and food security in member States.

9. Statements were made by the representatives of the following countries: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; India; Pakistan; and Papua New Guinea. In addition, the representative of the Asia-Pacific Association for Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) made a statement.

10. The Governing Council expressed satisfaction regarding the progress CAPSA had achieved since the ninth session of the Council and commended the Centre for its achievements under the constraints of limited staff and resources. The Council emphasized the general importance of sustainable agriculture for enabling socioeconomic development in the region, and recommended that CAPSA pursue regional-level studies on the linkage between sustainable agriculture and poverty. It also suggested that different models for linking farmers with markets be assessed and that policy recommendations be developed for the region. The Council stressed the need to quantify the dimensions of sustainability in order for agriculture to provide better solutions for dealing with the problems of hunger, food insecurity and poverty. The Council underscored the role of regional forums and networks for facilitating policy advocacy and knowledge-sharing in the region, and noted the tangible benefits being derived by member States from the work of the Centre in that context.

B. Progress of the Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia

(Agenda item 2c)

11. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Head of the Centre (MPDD/CAPSA/GC(10)/2, section V). The document was introduced by the Head of the Centre.

12. The Governing Council was informed that the SATNET Asia project, which was aimed at strengthening South-South dialogue and intraregional learning on sustainable agriculture technologies and trade, had entered its second year of implementation. The Centre had led the component on knowledge-sharing and had facilitated a large number of trainings, which had had approximately 500 participants during the year. Consultations with SATNET participants had ensured a demand-driven approach to the training conducted in each country. In addition, a structured and transparent screening process had been implemented to select training participants. Positive feedback had been received from training evaluations with regard to the quality and relevance of the capacity-building events organized. Through those knowledge-sharing events, SATNET was building capacity among researchers and extension workers to better transfer knowledge on sustainable agriculture technologies and trade to farmers. In addition, SATNET was extending an opportunity for high-level policymakers to exchange experiences on key sustainable agriculture and trade issues in their respective country and region. It was also serving as a platform to facilitate the sharing of knowledge among network participants through face-to-face events, as well as through online and social media tools.

13. Statements were made by the representatives of the following countries: Bangladesh; India; Pakistan; and Papua New Guinea. The delegate of APAARI also made a statement.

14. Some delegations suggested that SATNET include farmer-to-farmer knowledge transfer in its activities. Some delegations recommended that the SATNET Asia project be expanded to cover the Pacific subregion. The Governing Council emphasized that regional networks, such as SATNET, were valuable in terms of providing access to global experts and resources in fields related to the agricultural development of different countries.

C. Administrative and financial status of CAPSA

(Agenda item 2b)

15. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Head of the Centre (MPDD/CAPSA/GC(10)/2, section III). The document was introduced by the Head of the Centre.

16. The Head of CAPSA provided an overview of the Centre's income and expenditures in 2013. The Centre's financial resources were divided into three categories:

(a) The first category was institutional support resources. Those resources were used to support the operations of the Centre that were not related to direct project activities, mainly cost of local support staff;

(b) The second category was technical cooperation project resources, which consisted of contributions by international donors for individual projects;

(c) The third category was support from the United Nations system through section 19 and section 23 funds,[1] which provided the Centre with the resources to cover the salary costs of two international staff members and one local support staff member. The Council was also informed of actions undertaken and progress made with respect to increasing and diversifying funding sources.

17. Statements were made by the representatives of the following member countries: Afghanistan; Indonesia; Malaysia; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; and Sri Lanka.

18. The delegation of Indonesia expressed regret at the delay in the payment of its Government's contribution and announced that the payment would be made shortly. With regard to the request by CAPSA to increase funding, the delegation had requested more time, as further discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were required. As in 2013, the Ministry of Agriculture would continue to provide in-kind budget support in 2014. The delegation of Malaysia also expressed regret at the delay in the payment of its Government's contribution and stated that the payments for 2013 and 2014 would be made shortly. The delegations of Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan stated that their respective Governments would look into the payment of past contributions.

19. Some delegations requested clarification regarding the process involved in sending requests for contributions. The Governing Council asked for clarification on the recommendations made during its previous session that ESCAP look into creating a trust fund for CAPSA that could supply seed money to be used to strengthen the Centre's finances and capability to undertake new projects and that a certain percentage of the overhead on project funds obtained by CAPSA be allocated to the trust fund for the administration of the Centre. The secretariat informed the Council that ESCAP continued to provide significant support to the Centre through other means.

D. Proposed focus of work of CAPSA in 2014
(Agenda item 2d)

20. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Head of the Centre (MPDD/CAPSA/GC(10)/2, section VI). The document was introduced by the Head of the Centre.

21. The Governing Council was informed that, in 2014, CAPSA would work to further strengthen and develop the three thematic areas proposed in its strategic plan 2011-2020. The Centre's capacity-building activities would be enhanced and consolidated. To that end, elements of a capacity-building strategy were presented to the Council. The Head of the Centre also presented a financial plan for 2014 to the Council.

22. Statements were made by the representatives of the following countries: Indonesia; Papua New Guinea; Sri Lanka; and Thailand. Statements were also made by representatives of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) and the World Bank.

[1] See General Assembly resolution 66/248 A.

23. A number of delegations identified areas of collaboration between their respective countries and CAPSA. The delegation of Indonesia expressed the country's interest to work with CAPSA on capacity-building for sustainable agriculture and poverty alleviation. The delegation of Thailand expressed its country's interest in supporting the network for extension agents. The delegation of Papua New Guinea expressed its country's interest in collaborating with the Centre in the area of agriculture statistics.

24. The delegation of FAO indicated the agency's strong interest in collaborating with the Centre in the implementation of an extension network and desire to work with ESCAP in mobilizing funding for it. The delegation of the World Bank expressed the organization's interest in exploring opportunities to jointly strengthen extension systems in the region. The delegation of JIRCAS expressed the organization's willingness to provide an in-kind contribution through staff expertise for relevant capacity-building activities.

25. The Governing Council agreed to the workplan and the financial plan presented by CAPSA.

E. Date and venue of the next session of the Governing Council
(Agenda item 3a)

26. The Governing Council decided that its eleventh session would be held in either Pakistan or Indonesia in late November 2014.

F. Other matters
(Agenda item 3b)

27. No other matters were discussed.

G. Adoption of the report and closure

28. The Governing Council had before it a set of draft recommendations. The recommendations were adopted. The Chair made a closing statement, thanking everyone for their participation, and then declared the session closed.

III. Organization of the session

A. Opening, duration and organization

29. The Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture held its tenth session in Bangkok on 13 December 2013.

30. The Director of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development welcomed the members of the Governing Council. He then asked the Chair of the ninth session of the Governing Council, the representative of Thailand, as the Chair in-charge, to open the meeting.

31. The Chair of the ninth session of the Governing Council thanked all representatives of member countries and international organizations for their presence.

32. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered a statement.

B. Attendance

33. The session was attended by representatives of the following members of the Governing Council: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Indonesia; Malaysia; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Sri Lanka; and Thailand.

34. Representatives of India attended as observers.

35. Representatives of the following United Nations agencies and related organizations attended: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific); and World Bank.

36. Representatives of the following organizations attended: Asia-Pacific Association for Agricultural Research Institutions; European Union; and Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences.

37. Representatives of the secretariat of ESCAP attended the session.

C. Election of officers

38. The Governing Council elected the following officers:

Chair: Mr. Iftikhar Ahmad (Pakistan)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Raghunath Dnyanu Ghodake (Papua New Guinea)

D. Agenda

39. The Governing Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
   - (a) Opening statements;
   - (b) Election of officers;
   - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Report of the Head of the Centre:
   - (a) Activities and accomplishments of CAPSA since the ninth session of the Governing Council;
   - (b) Administrative and financial status of CAPSA;
   - (c) Progress of the Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia;
   - (d) Proposed focus of work of CAPSA in 2014.
3. Date and venue of the next session of the Governing Council.
4. Other matters.
5. Adoption of the report.

Annex I

Financial statement of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture for the year ended 31 December 2013
(United States dollars)

	2013	2012
Income		
Contributions	1 916 896	372 218
Interest income	5 241	6 657
	1 922 137	378 875
Less: Expenditure	1 545 407	946 704
Net income over expenditure	376 730	(567 829)
Fund balance as of 1 January 2013	456 684	1 024 513
Refunds to donors	-	
Fund balance as at 31 December 2013	**833 414**	**456 684**

Annex II

Financial statement of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture for the year ended 31 December 2013 by project component
(United States dollars)

	Joint contributions capacity development project – Institutional support	European Union project led by CAPSA: Network for Knowledge Transfer on SATNET Asia[a]	United Nations regular programme of technical cooperation (Section 23)	Total
Income				
Contributions	233 602[b]	1 212 890	470 404	1 916 896
Interest income	1 089	4 152	-	5 241
	234 691	1 217 042	470 404	1 922 137
Less: Expenditure	186 413	888 590	470 404	1 545 407
Net income over expenditure	48 278	328 452	-	376 730
Fund balance as at 1 January 2013	141 720	314 964	-	456 684
Refunds to donors	-	-	-	-
Fund balance as at 31 December 2013	**189 998**	**643 416**		**833 414**

[a] This project is jointly implemented by the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA), the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) and the Trade and Investment Division of the secretariat, with CAPSA as the lead. The CAPSA share of the contribution in 2013 is $839,683.

[b] Please refer to the following page for details of the contributions.

Annex III

Cash contributions to the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture for institutional support received during the year 2013
(United States dollars)

Contributors	Year ended 31 December 2013	Year ended 31 December 2012
Bangladesh	1 000	1 000
Indonesia	82 068	79 622
Macao, China	3 000	3 000
Malaysia	10 027	19 970
Myanmar	5 000	-
Papua New Guinea	7 000	-
Philippines	21 000	-
Republic of Korea	20 000	20 000
Sri Lanka	5 000	5 000
Thailand	10 000	10 000
FAO - Thailand	62 985	-
University of Hohenheim	6 522	-
Total	**233 602**	**138 592**